

RISE OF THE MIDNIGHT SONS™

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MORBIUS™



WAGNER LINTHURBY

Part 3
of 6



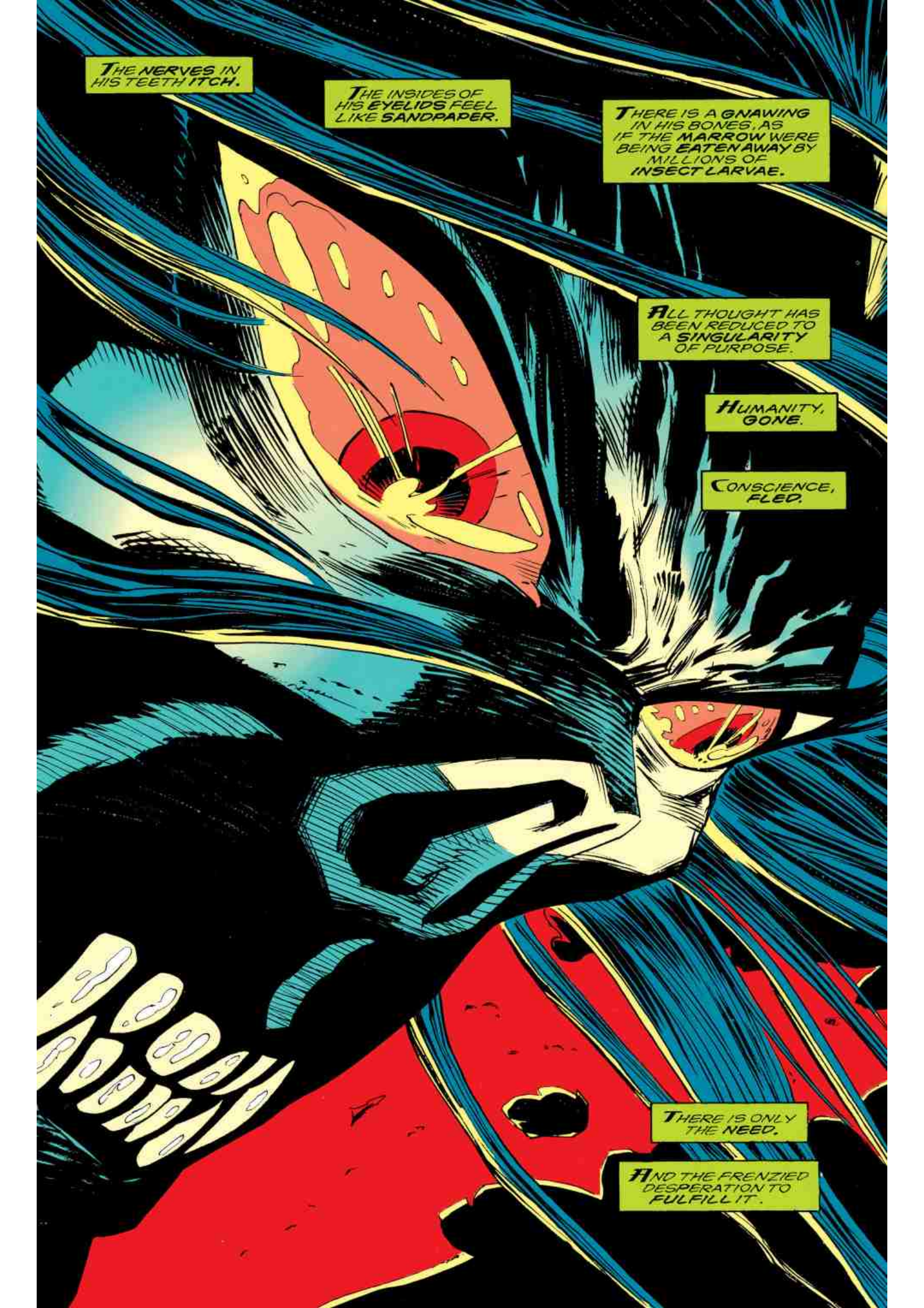
For eons, the walls between our earth and the supernatural realms have held fast ... until now. Now those walls are weakening, and LILITH, Queen of Evil, Mother of Demons, has risen from her slumber to shatter the walls and free her hellish spawn. Only the strangest of alliances can drive her back ... a union of old enemies and new heroes, in a battle forever to be remembered as the ...

RISE OF THE MIDNIGHT SONS™

MORBIUS #1 PART 3

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GHOST RIDER #28 Part 1
SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #1 Part 2
DARKHOLD #1 Part 4
NIGHTSTALKERS #1 Part 5
GHOST RIDER #31 Part 6



*THE NERVES IN
HIS TEETH ITCH.*

*THE INSIDES OF
HIS EYELIDS FEEL
LIKE SANDPAPER.*

*THERE IS A GNAWING
IN HIS BONES, AS
IF THE MARROW WERE
BEING EATEN AWAY BY
MILLIONS OF
INSECT LARVAE.*

*ALL THOUGHT HAS
BEEN REDUCED TO
A SINGULARITY
OF PURPOSE.*

*HUMANITY,
GONE.*

*CONSCIENCE,
FLED.*

*THERE IS ONLY
THE NEED.*

*AND THE FRENZIED
DESPERATION TO
FULFILL IT.*



THERE.

BELOW.

THE
REDHEAD.

HE CAN
SMELL
HER.

STENCH OF CHEAP
PERFUME.

RANCID SCENT OF
CLOTHES THAT SHOULD
HAVE BEEN WASHED
RATHER THAN WORN.

BUT BENEATH
THAT...



OHNNNNNN...

THE SWEETNESS.

HIS ACHING THROAT
SCREAMS, "NOW!"

THE ENDLESS
EMPTINESS IN
HIS STOMACH SHRIEKS
"YES! YES!"



"NOW!"



HHA??

Mgbn...



ACROSS TOWN...

COMIN' THROUGH.

SKRUK

SUCH WONDERFULLY MALEVOLENT AMBIANCE.

AND THAT DREADFUL CACOPHONY, LIKE THE MUSIC OF THE TORMENTED--TELL ME, DEAR ONE, WHAT IS IT CALLED?

SPEED METAL.

THIS USED TO BE A CATHEDRAL BACK BEFORE IT WAS A GOTHIC CLUB.

WHAT DELIGHTS THERE ARE IN THIS NEW WORLD.

PERHAPS WE WILL TARRY A BIT--

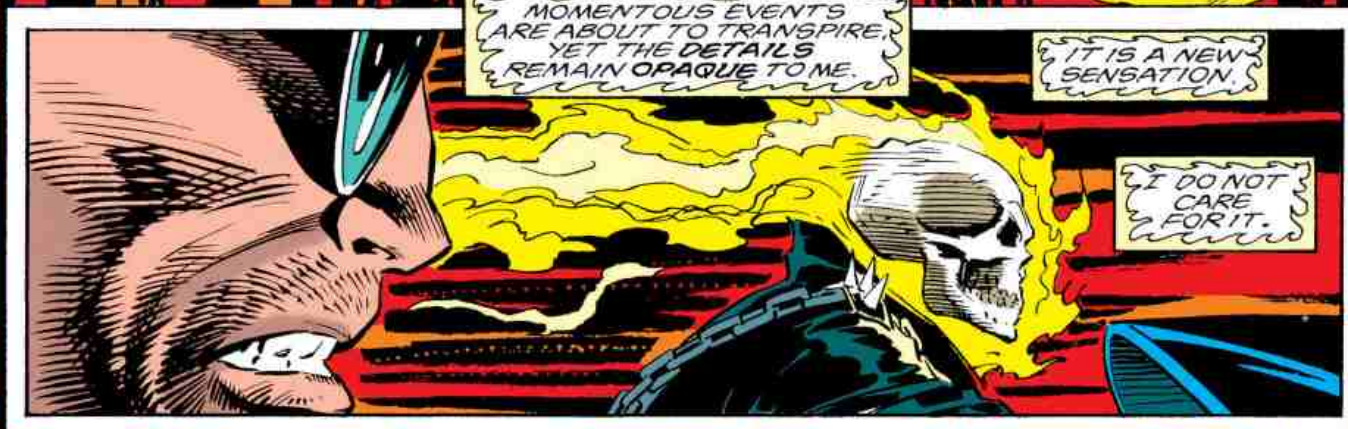
--AFTER WE HAVE FOUND THOSE OF MY WAYWARD CHILDREN WE SEEK.

AH.

THERE YOU ARE, MY DARLINGS.

HOW I'VE MISSED YOU THROUGH THE AEONS.

COME TO MOTHER.



JOHN BLAZE AND
I HAVE RETURNED TO
NEW YORK IN SEARCH
OF THE CREATURE
CALLED BLACKOUT.

**THAK
THAK
THAK**

OUR ONLY LEADS,
A MANHATTAN HOTEL
ROOM NUMBER
AND A WOMAN'S
NAME.

YES?

MARTINE
BANCROFT?

YES...

CAN I
HELP
YOU?

MAY WE
ENTER?

IT CONCERNS
INNOCENT
BLOOD.

SHORTLY...

...SO GHOST RIDER AND I THINK YOU MIGHT BE INVOLVED--

--BUT WE DON'T KNOW HOW.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THE CITY?

I'M... LOOKING FOR SOMEONE.

THIS... MAN--

...HE WAS PART OF THAT WHICH WAS REVEALED TO ME.X...

TELL ME MORE OF THIS "MORBIUS."

NOW HOLD ON--

YOU BARGE IN HERE, GIVE ME THE THIRD DEGREE--

--JUST WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

HIS NAME IS...MICHAEL MORBIUS.

--A LIVING VAMPIRE.

THAT'S RIGHT.

I MUST SEE THAT PHOTOGRAPH!

MORBIUS... MORBIUS... I'VE HEARD THAT...

HE WAS THE GUY WHO TURNED HIMSELF INTO--

HEY!

... I SAW HIM... YET... NOT QUITE LIKE THIS...

*IN GHOST RIDER #28.

AN INTERESTED PARTY.

SKKLATCH

OH.



"AHUM."
I'M NOT
EVEN GOING
TO ASK.
I DON'T
WANT TO
KNOW.

HOLD
ON A SEC,
OKAY?
I NEED
A DRINK.

PLIPPIP

ALL
RIGHT.

I DON'T KNOW
MUCH ABOUT HIS
BACKGROUND, IT
WAS THE ONE THING
HE WOULDN'T TALK
TO ME ABOUT.

I'VE NO
IDEA WHY.



MICHAEL WAS
A BIOLOGIST.

A BRILLIANT
ONE.

BY THE TIME
WE MET, HE'D
ALREADY WON
THE NOBEL
PRIZE.

SOME THOUGHT
HE MIGHT EQUAL
PASTEUR, SALK,
OR CRICK
AND WATSON.

WE FELL
IN LOVE.

WE WERE
ENGAGED TO BE
MARRIED.

NEITHER OF
US KNEW IT,
THEN, BUT BY
THAT TIME...

...MICHAEL
WAS ALREADY
DYING.

HE'D CONTRACTED
A RARE-- AND FATAL
BLOOD DISEASE.

AT SOME POINT,
HE DISCOVERED
HIS CONDITION.

AND FOR
MONTHS, LABORED
IN SECRET TO FIND
A CURE.



"HE BECAME DESPERATE
AS HIS TIME RAN OUT.

"HE STARTED EXPERIMENTING
WITH STRANGE, UNTESTED
TREATMENTS.

"SERUMS
EXTRACTED
FROM
VAMPIRE
BATS.



"ELECTRO-SHOCK
THERAPY.

"IT WORKED...
SORT OF."



"OH, HE'D STAVED OFF
THE DISEASE, ALL RIGHT--
BUT THERE WAS
A HORRIBLE SIDE
EFFECT.

"AFTER HE ALMOST KILLED
ME,* HE AVOIDED ME
COMPLETELY, RATHER
THAN RISK IT
HAPPENING AGAIN.

"LATER, HE WENT INTO
A KIND OF REMISSION,
AND GOT A CHANCE TO
REBUILD HIS LIFE.



"THE TREATMENTS
HAD TRANSFORMED
HIM INTO A CREATURE
WHICH HAD TO FEED ON
HUMAN BLOOD
TO LIVE.

"A... LIVING
VAMPIRE.

"I PRAYED HE WOULD
SUCCEED, THAT
MAYBE WE COULD
BE TOGETHER,
AGAIN.

* FEAR #31.



"BUT THEN I HEARD THAT
HE'D RELAPSED, AND
HAD ENCOUNTERED
THE OCCULT EXPERT
STEPHEN STRANGE.

* DR. STRANGE #10.



"MOST RECENTLY HE SUPPOSEDLY
FOUGHT SPIDER-MAN.*

* SPIDER-
MAN #13.

"WHEN I HEARD,
I KNEW WHAT
I HAD TO DO.



UPTOWN, IN THE PRIVATE
LABORATORY OF
DOCTOR DAVID LANGFORD...

VEEEEP

YES?

DAVID?
IT'S MARTINE.

IS EVERY-
THING
READY?

JUST
ABOUT.

I'VE
FOUND
SOME...
HELP.

WE'RE LEAVING NOW--
WE'LL PICK YOU UP
ON THE WAY.

MICHAEL,
MICHAEL,
MICHAEL.

CLP

RECOMBINANT
GENE SPLICING
UTILIZING
CUSTOMIZED
VIRAL AGENTS
MICHAEL MORBIUS
UNPUBLISHED

YOU REALLY ARE
TOO BRILLIANT FOR
YOUR OWN GOOD.

IF YOU HAD JUST
ACCEPTED YOUR DISEASE,
YOU'D AT LEAST BE
RESTING IN PEACE NOW.

IF YOU HADN'T WRITTEN
SO MANY BRILLIANT,
UNPUBLISHED PAPERS DURING
YOUR REMISSION, YOU WOULDN'T
HAVE ATTRACTED SO MUCH
OF THE WRONG KIND
OF ATTENTION.

AND IF YOU HADN'T
STUDIED YOUR CONDITION
SO THOROUGHLY, AND
KEPT SUCH
DETAILED NOTES--

-- I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO
SYNTHESIZE A SERUM
WHICH WILL PROVE FATAL
TO YOUR PECULIAR
METABOLISM--

THIS IS
LANGFORD.

-- THAT'D LOOK
LIKE AN HONEST
ATTEMPT TO CURE
YOU DURING AN
AUTOPSY.

TELL DR. PAINE THAT
EVERYTHING IS PROCEEDING
ACCORDING TO PLAN.

BACK AT THE LIMELIGHT...

THERE IS A MAN
I MUST KILL, NAMED
MICHAEL MORBIUS.

COME
CLOSER,
NAKOTA
DARLING.

I REQUIRE
THE KIND OF
HELP ONLY YOUR
SPECIAL
TALENT CAN
PROVIDE.

LOOK
OUT INTO
THE NIGHT,
DEAR

FIND
HIM.

AND SHOW
ME WHAT
YOU SEE--

-- WITH YOUR OWN
SPECIAL
VISION.

AH.

TWO OF
OUR
ENEMIES.

AN
ALCHEMIST.

SOME
TYPE OF
ELIXIR.

A DESPERATE
WOMAN.

ALL
SEARCHING
FOR ONE
MAN.

A MAN WHOSE
DISEASE MAKES
HIM LIKE UNTO
A CREATURE
OF THE
NIGHT.

THANK
YOU,
DEAR.

FANG.

I HAVE AN ERRAND
FOR YOU TO RUN,
DEAR BOY.

**DAWN
COMES.**

**TIME TO HIDE.
TIME TO
SLEEP.**

**HIDE TO AVOID
THE SUN'S
ULTRAVIOLET,
WHICH SEARS
HIS FLESH.**

**SLEEP TO ESCAPE
HIS GUILT, WHICH
BURNS HIM
FROM WITHIN.**



**THIS IS HIS
PROPER
PLACE, NOW.**

**WITH THE
COCKROACHES,
THE RATS...**

**THE LIGHT OF
DAY CREEPS OVER
THE HORIZON.**



**AND OTHER
PARASITES.**



**HE MUST RETURN
TO THE
DARKNESS.**



**WHERE HE
BELONGS.**

**WE WILL ENTER
THE BUILDING
FIRST.**

**YOU KNOW, MARTINE,
YOU'RE ACQUAINTED WITH
SOME OF THE MOST
INTERESTING PEOPLE...**



READY...?



GO!



YOO-HOO!

AVON CALLING!

WHO IS THIS "AVON?"

NEVER MIND.



PERHAPS ANSWERS WILL BE FORTHCOMING...



HOPE WE DON'T HAVE TO BLOW THE POOR GUY AWAY...



SUPPOSE SHE'LL HAVE TO DIE, TOO.

PLEASE, MICHAEL, LET US HELP YOU...



MORBIUS!

MICHAEL!

GET BACK!

SKRANK

SKRANK

SNAR-GGGH!



DID YOU REALLY THINK I'D BE SUCH EASY PREY?!

BEGONE!

LEAVE ME TO MY MISERY--

--OR I'LL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MY ACTIONS!



MICHAEL, PLEASE LET US--

MARTINE?!



DON'T LOOK AT ME!

WE ONLY WANT TO HELP YOU!

THERE IS NO HELP FOR ME--

--EXCEPT DEATH!



BUT MORBIUS WILL NOT DIE TODAY!

FIRE IN THE HOLE!



FWHOOOM

WINGED 'IM-- BUT--



I HAVE HIM.



THRAP



HE'S ONLY STUNNED.

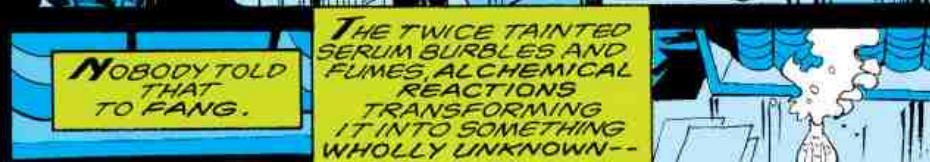
WE HAVE TO GET HIM BACK TO THE LAB.

FOR TREATMENT.

MEANWHILE, BACK
AT THE LAB...



SspBBLLP



LATER...

IS HE--

JUST SOME
MINOR
CONTUSIONS.

NOTHING
SERIOUS.

HE'LL BE
FINE.



NOT FOR
LONG,
THOUGH.

IRONIC.

HERE I AM,
TRYING
TO PREVENT
MINOR
INFECTIONS
IN A MAN
I'M ABOUT
TO MURDER.



GOT TO KEEP UP
APPEARANCES,
THOUGH.

WHAT SECRETS ARE
LOCKED WITHIN THAT
TORMENTED MIND?



AND WHAT IS THEIR
SIGNIFICANCE TO ME?

YOU'LL
BE WELL
SOON,
MICHAEL.

I
PROMISE.

SHE'S
TOUCHING
HIM.

SHE
MUST
REALLY
LOVE
THE GUY.



ALL
RIGHT.

I'M ABOUT
READY
TO BEGIN.

BEST CLEAR
THE ROOM.





ODD... THE
SERUM'S
CHANGED
COLOR...



DON'T
SUPPOSE IT
MATTERS
MUCH...



ALL THINGS
CONSIDERED...



AAAHHGGG



SOMETHING'S
WRONG....!

IT SHOULDN'T
BE HAPPENING
LIKE THIS!



HE'S
MUTATING...

CELLULAR
TRANSFORMATION...

DNA
ALTERATION...

GOD KNOWS
WHAT ELSE...

DIE!
DIE!

WHY WON'T
YOU DIE?!



DAYBREAK IS
A HOLOCAUST.

MORBIUS IS
NOT A MORNING
PERSON.

FOR HIM, SUNLIGHT
BRINGS DEHYDRATION...

...RETINA
DAMAGE...

...MELANOMA...

...AND
EVENTUALLY,
DEATH.

HIS FLESH
WRITHES ON
HIS BONES,
BURNED BY
THE AWFUL
RADIANCE--

--WHILE
WITHIN,
HIS TISSUES
SHUDDER FROM
THE EFFECTS OF
THE CHEMICALS
STILL FILTERING
THROUGH
HIS SYSTEM.

CHANGING
HIM.

RE-MAKING
HIM.



HE MUST
FIND
SHELTER--
OR DIE.

BUT
WHERE?



WAIT.

THERE IS
SOMEONE...
NEARLY
FORGOTTEN...

SOMEONE HE
MIGHT BE ABLE
TO TRUST... WHO
MIGHT GIVE HIM...
SANCTUARY.

DESPERATION DRIVES
HIM BACK OUT INTO
THE BLINDING SKY--



-- FILLED WITH
FRANTIC NEW
STRENGTH--



-- IF NOT
HOPE.







EASY NOW.



JACOB?



ALMOST NINE HOURS.

AND MY CONDITION...

BEATS ME. YOU WERE A MESS THIS MORNING.

THERE SEEMS TO BE AN UNKNOWN FACTOR IN YOUR SYSTEM.

IT'S CAUSING ALL KINDS OF STRANGE PHYSIOLOGICAL REACTIONS.

I DID A FEW TESTS, BUT I'M NOT REALLY EQUIPPED FOR THIS SORT OF THING.

UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, I'D INSIST ON TAKING YOU STRAIGHT TO A HOSPITAL, BUT...

THEN YOU KNOW WHAT I HAVE BECOME--

--AND THAT I'M A WANTED CRIMINAL.



BUT WHAT I KNOW IS THAT YOU'RE MY FRIEND.

AND YOU NEED MY HELP.



INCREASE IN T-4 CELLS AND LEUKOCYTES...

STIMULATION OF IMMUNE RESPONSE...?

SPONTANEOUS CELLULAR REGENERATION...?

BUT IT CAN'T BE...



--STABLE...



NO.



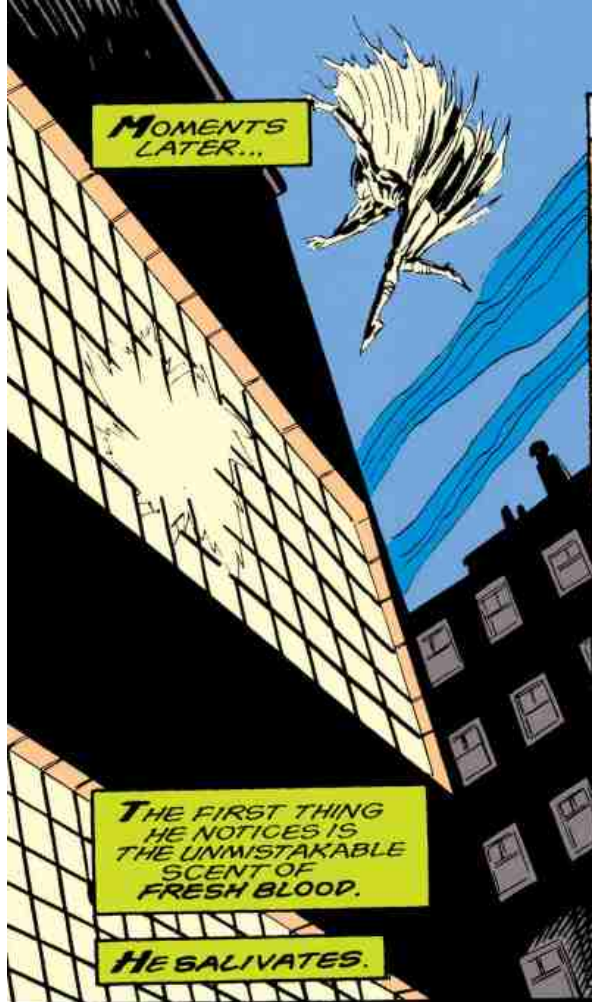




LET HIS PREY
BEWARE.







**MOMENTS
LATER...**

**THE FIRST THING
HE NOTICES IS
THE UNMISTAKABLE
SCENT OF
FRESH BLOOD.**

HE SALIVATES.



MARTINE!

NO!

NO!



**SHOCK
LEADS
CLARITY.**

**FOR A MOMENT,
HE IS JUST
A MAN AGAIN.**



**A MAN IN
PAIN.**

SHHHH.

MICHAEL?

**IT'S...
ALL
RIGHT.**



**I LOVE
YOU.**

BUT.

**I LOVE...
YOU...
TOO...**



**THERE'S SO MUCH
BLOOD.**



HE CAN'T.



HE CAN'T.

**HE CAN'T
HELP
HIMSELF.**



**SHLLLUPP...
SHULPP...**



DEAR
GOD--

--WHAT HAVE
I DONE?!



NEVER
AGAIN!

NEVER
AGAIN!



THE TIME HAS
COME TO *END*
MY CURSED
EXISTENCE--

-- BEFORE STILL
MORE DIE TO
SLAKE
MY *INHUMAN*
THIRST!

BUT
FIRST--

-- I WILL HAVE
VENGEANCE!



OH-OH.





HE HAS KILLED AGAIN.

WHERE IS THE REMORSE?

HE SEARCHES HIMSELF... AND FINDS NO REGRETS.

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HIS CURSE BEGAN, DRINKING BLOOD HAS BROUGHT NOT JUST RELIEF--

--BUT SATISFACTION.

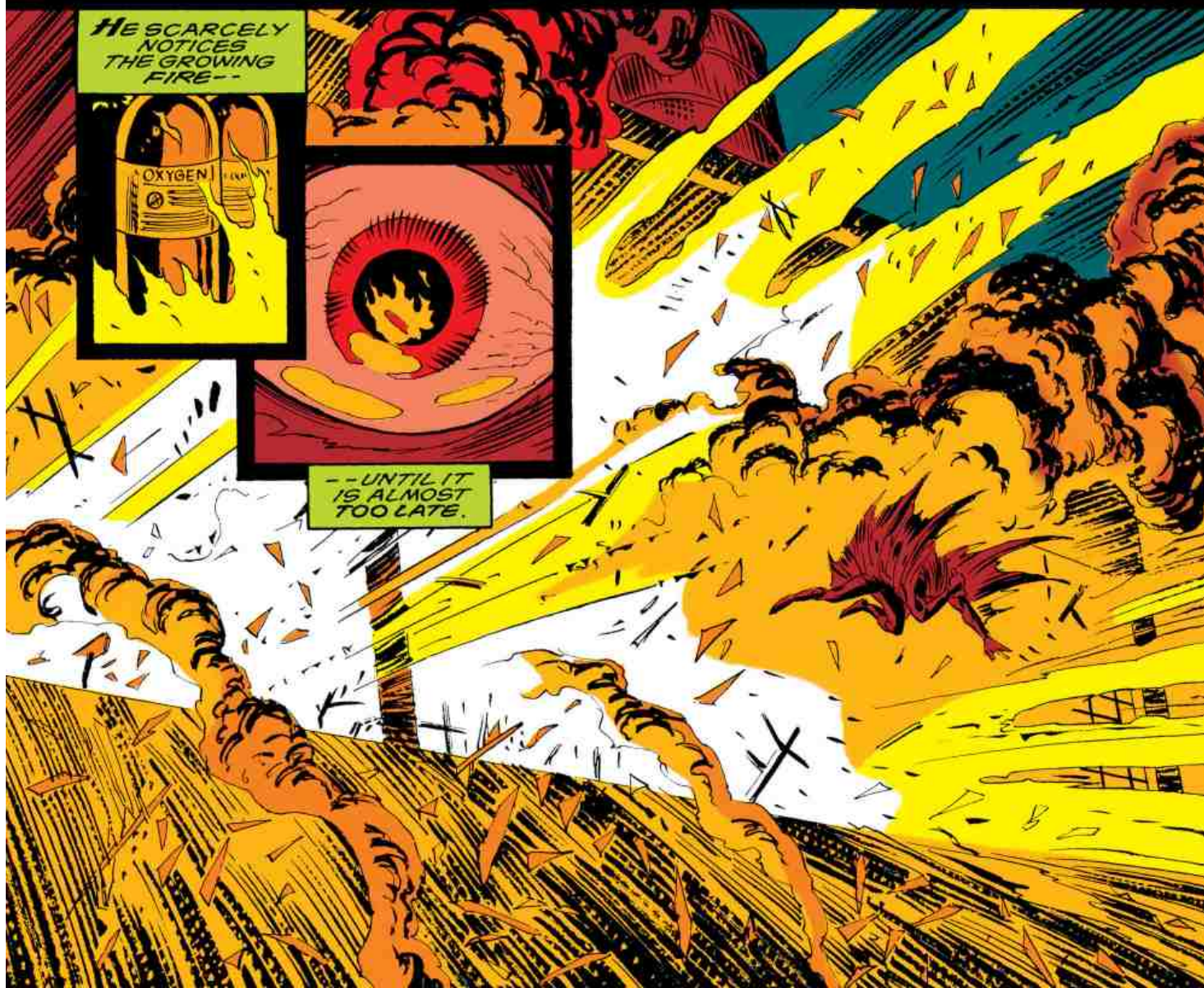
HE WILL NOT END HIS LIFE TODAY.

HE FINDS THE BEAKER OF SERUM WITHIN WHOSE UNKNOWN CHEMICAL STRUCTURE THE SECRETS OF HIS SALVATION MAY BE HIDING.

HE SCARCELY NOTICES THE GROWING FIRE--



--UNTIL IT IS ALMOST TOO LATE.





LANGFORD'S
SERUM WAS
MEANT TO
KILL ME.

APPARENTLY,
MARTINE
DISCOVERED
LANGFORD'S
TREACHERY.

SOMETHING
WENT WRONG,
AND INSTEAD, IT CAUSED
FURTHER MUTAGENIC
REACTIONS IN
MY PHYSIOLOGY WHICH
I HAVE YET
TO UNDERSTAND.

SO HE
MURDERED
HER.

FOR
WHICH
HE HAS
PAID.



I MUST EMPLOY
THE PENANCE
STARE.

IF THERE
IS DECEIT
IN MORBIUS'S
WORDS, IT
WILL BE
REVEALED.



THE GHOST RIDER'S
PENANCE STARE
IS A MIRROR BY
WHICH THE DARK
SIDE OF THE SOUL
IS REFLECTED.

THIS IS WHAT
MORBIUS SEES.

WHY?

I HAD A
FAMILY

I LOVED
ANIMALS...

I WAS
ONLY
17--

Y-Y-YOU
SH-SH-SHOULDN'T
H-H-HAVE...

I WANTED
CHILDREN...

I WUZ
A DRUNK,
BUT I DINT
DESERVE TA
DIE...

IT HURTS,
OH, GOD,
IT HURTS
SO BAD...

PLEASE,
NO...

I WAS
GETTING
MARRIED IN
ANOTHER
WEEK...

I JUST
WANTED TO
LIVE...

I PLAYED
VIOLIN...

I WOULD
HAVE BEEN
THE FIRST IN
MY FAMILY
TO GO TO
COLLEGE...

WHY DON'T
YOU KILL
YOURSELF?

GIVE ME
MY LIFE
BACK!

HIS VICTIMS
SCREAM FOR
JUSTICE...

YOU'RE
GOING
TO BURN,
YOU
KNOW...

THEIR VOICES ARE NOT
UNFAMILIAR TO HIM.



NNUHH

YOU HAVE
NOT SHOWN ME
ANYTHING,
GHOST RIDER--

-- THAT I DID NOT
ALREADY KNOW.



THERE IS NO
DECEIT HERE.

YOU PRESENT
ME WITH
A QUANDARY,
MORBIUS.

ONLY A SOUL
IN TORMENT.



YOU ARE
NOT WITHOUT
CONSCIENCE,
AND YET--

-- I CANNOT
ALLOW YOU
TO CONTINUE
TO DRINK
INNOCENT
BLOOD.



ACCEPT
THIS VOW,
THEN:



IF I MUST
DRINK BLOOD,
LET IT BE
THE BLOOD OF
THE CORRUPT--

-- OF THOSE
WHO
DESERVE
TO DIE.

THE BLOOD
OF
THE GUILTY.



VERY WELL.

ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE CHOSEN A ROAD WHICH IS FAR THORNIER THAN YOU SUSPECT--

-- I SHALL NOT INTERFERE.

BE WARNED, THOUGH--



-- SHOULD YOU STRAY FROM IT --



-- WE SHALL MEET AGAIN.

IT IS IRONIC.



I SOUGHT MORBILIS THINKING THAT HE WOULD PLAY A ROLE IN MY OWN DESTINY.

ONLY TO DISCOVER THAT I AM BUT A MINOR CHARACTER IN HIS.



HE HAS LOST LOVE.

HE HAS FOUND PURPOSE.

HE HAS BEEN GIVEN HOPE.



HE WONDERS...



WHAT WILL TOMORROW NIGHT BRING?



BY YOG-SOKOT!



ANOTHER OF THESE INSIGNIFICANT MORTALS HAS ESCAPED MY GRASP!



I'LL NOT STAND FOR IT!



BUT... NO.

REVENGE MUST WAIT FOR ANOTHER DAY.

THERE ARE OTHERS WHO MUST DIE FIRST--

-- OTHER MORTALS FAR LESS POWERFUL THAN MORBIUS.



NAKOTA, DARLING...

YES, DEAR, I KNOW YOU'RE WEARY...

BUT I NEED YOUR SIGHT.



SHOW ME THE WHEREABOUTS OF VICTORIA MONTESI...*

*RISE OF THE MIDNIGHT SONS CONTINUES IN DARKHOLD #1--ON SALE NEXT MONTH!



IT CAN ONLY BE
ONE MAN--
-- THE MOST
NIGHTMARISH
OF ALL MY
ENEMIES--
-- MORBIUS!



AND I'M GOING
TO HAVE TO DO
SOMETHING
ABOUT IT--
-- AS
SPIDER-
MAN.

**NEXT
ISSUE: WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE!**

NOPE-- SPIDER-MAN DOESN'T SHOW UP NEXT ISH; HE DOESN'T GET HERE UNTIL ISSUE #3. IT'S JUST AS WELL, BECAUSE MORBIUS IS GOING TO HAVE HIS HANDS FULL ANYWAY. BE HERE IN 30 DAYS FOR--